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THESIS

**SELF-ESTEEM:
MODELS AND IMPLICATIONS
FOR MANAGEMENT**

by

Manfred R. Becker

December, 1993

Thesis Advisor:

Kenneth Thomas

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Self-Esteem: Models and Implications for Management

by

Manfred R. Becker
B. S., University of Wisconsin

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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from the

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents a literature review of self-esteem, primarily as it relates to organizations and management. Based on this literature review, self-esteem is defined as the emotional valuation individuals have of themselves and the degree of certainty of this valuation. Several models of self-esteem are presented.

The relationship of coping and avoidance to self-esteem is considered. Coping is presented as being one of the primary sources for increased self-esteem. Likewise, self-esteem is a major influence on one's choice of coping versus avoiding. This makes self-esteem of significant potential value to organizations.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. REVIEW OF SELF-ESTEEM RESEARCH AND LITERATURE . . .	6
A. EARLY WORKS ON SELF-ESTEEM	6
B. CONTEMPORARY WORKS ON SELF-ESTEEM	20
1. Disparity Theories	20
2. Self-efficacy	26
3. Avoidance and Coping	28
C. RESEARCH ON SELF-ESTEEM IN ORGANIZATIONS . . .	30
III. A WORKING DEFINITION AND FRAMEWORK FOR SELF- ESTEEM	36
A. A DEFINITION	36
B. SELF-ESTEEM VERSUS SELF AND SELF CONCEPT . . .	38
C. SELF-ESTEEM VERSUS EGOTISM	44
D. GLOBAL VERSUS SITUATIONAL SELF-ESTEEM	47
E. AN ANALOGY	56
IV. IMPLICATIONS: ENHANCING SELF-ESTEEM	59
A. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS	60
1. The Importance of Self-esteem for Coping Behavior	60

2. The Crucial Role of Self-esteem in	
Unstructured Tasks	62
3. The Change Process: Enhancing Self-esteem .	65
B. IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	74
LIST OF REFERENCES	76
INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST	80

I. INTRODUCTION

In the early years of this century, the German psychologist Hermann Ebbinghaus made an observation that became famous: "Psychology has a long past, but only a short history." In essence, he was saying that although the subtopics of psychology had been considered for many years, it had only been considered as a scientific discipline beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century. As this quote remains true for the field of psychology, it is even more applicable to self-esteem. Although people have long realized that self concept and self-esteem are important, it has only recently been considered as a viable field of scientific study.

In general, self-esteem refers to the evaluation individuals make and maintain with regard to themselves. It is the subjective, personal, and emotional judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual holds toward the self.

The importance of self-esteem to individuals is a strong theme in the clinical, social, and behavioral psychology literature. People desire to maintain a favorable self-image. To maintain a certain self-image, a typical person will at times use certain defenses and coping techniques, often without cognitively realizing the process. However, research

has found that if people are unable to support their desired self-image, even with normal use of defense reactions, they may resort to chronic dependency on these defenses. Their chronic use often increases the problem and contributes to a spiral of decreasing effectiveness, which is viewed as abnormal behavior. If these attempts to find self-acceptance resort to extreme, costly and ineffective devices (defenses), these people are often identified as mentally ill, neurotic or psychotic (Williams, 1978).

In the last twenty-five years, management researchers have devoted increasing attention to the role of self-esteem in the work place. A 1981 literature search on self-esteem, with regard to organizations and management, found that 74 specific entries existed (Perry, 1981). An update of the identical literature search in 1991 revealed 367 entries (Becker, 1991). Not only has the amount of effort being expended increased, but as will be brought out, the detail of research has significantly improved.

How appropriate is the consideration of self-esteem to organizations? This may be best addressed by an example, such as the multi-year study cited by Pete Bradshaw.

At the beginning, the company showed all the symptoms of an organization with a poor view of itself. For example, the rate of unplanned professional employee turnover was nearly 20 percent. Surveys of employee morale were only 52 percent positive, and the annual net contribution to profit per employee was only \$14,500. Many observations and private discussions demonstrated that the organization showed little creativity and was generally unwilling to challenge authority or to deal

with conflict. Blaming other groups or departments was common, and there was little collaborative effort. Individually, employees expressed anger, fear, and pessimism about their futures.

By the end of the project, turnover was 4 percent, survey results were 76 percent positive, and the contribution to profit was \$50,700 per employee.

The key to the success of the project was the deliberate enhancement of self-esteem for individuals and departments (Bradshaw, 1981, p. 28-30).

Organizational research has demonstrated that self-esteem is significantly correlated with a number of behaviors. In comparison to an individual with low self-esteem, an individual with high self-esteem is: less likely to imitate the style of their manager (Weiss 1977, 1978); less likely to be affected by chronic stressors, such as role ambiguity and conflict (Mossholder, Bedeian & Armenakis 1981); less likely to alter their performance relative to the supportiveness of their work group (Mossholder, Bedeian & Armenakis 1982); more likely to work harder after significant negative feedback (Brockner & Elkind 1985); and more likely to be productive in quality circles (Brockner & Hess, 1986).

While extensive research has been undertaken on self-esteem, there is not a comprehensive, organized, or accepted theoretical framework for understanding the role of self-esteem in organizations, or its implications for management. In fact, there are several competing definitions of the concept itself. Thus, the uninitiated will find the literature disorganized and under-developed relative to its importance.

The increased empirical research in this area has also generated findings that cast doubt on the accuracy and validity of earlier self-esteem theories. Reviews of the literature by Wylie (1961, 1974, 1979) revealed that often weak or insignificant results emerged even where theory and conventional wisdom predicted strong results. As with many other studies of personality traits being predictors or determinants of behavior, the traits were weakly related, or not related at all, to the outcomes measure of interest (Guion & Gottier 1965; Mischel 1968).

This thesis is based on a desire to aid those managers who desire to comprehend the subject. Therefore, the thrust of the thesis is to further the understanding of self-esteem and its managerial implications. In support of this purpose, the thesis will provide a theoretical framework for understanding the role of self-esteem in organizations, specifically for those within the Department of Defense.

The organization of this thesis is as follows. First, a short history of self-esteem literature will be presented in Chapter II, with emphasis being placed on those works which have considered self-esteem in an organizational setting. The thesis will generally avoid those portions of literature which deal primarily with family counseling, as well as adolescent or developmental self-esteem. This chapter is broken into three major sections; the early works on self-esteem that laid a foundation, and those works more closely associated with the

contemporary schools of thought. It concludes with a brief summary of employee self-esteem research studies and the relationships they revealed.

Chapter III will present a definition and two models of self-esteem that will be used throughout the remainder of the thesis. The goal of our definition is to provide for a non-sophisticated, managerial understanding of the topic. The framework will provide additional understanding by clarifying the structure of self-esteem and its relationship to other variables. Additionally, some analogies will be presented to aid the reader's comprehension. All of these will be built upon the history and research previously summarized.

The thesis will conclude in Chapter IV with implications of our theory for managers. The implications will build from the theory, definition, and framework and show its importance and potential for consideration and application.

Finally, a listing of the references used in support of this thesis is provided. These references should be particularly helpful for the reader wishing to further their study in this fascinating field.

II. REVIEW OF SELF-ESTEEM RESEARCH AND LITERATURE

This chapter is not an attempt to consider all works on the topic of self-esteem. Such a review is not required to gain a sufficient understanding of the topic for our current needs. Further, the literature has become so extensive that a comprehensive review would require a dedicated endeavor of massive proportions. Rather, this chapter will present some of the early works that laid the basic foundation for an understanding of self-esteem. Then it will consider some of the more recent works, especially as they apply to organizational settings. This chapter will conclude with a summary of the relevant research studies.

As each work is addressed, some of its more salient features, in relation to previous works, will be discussed. This should assist the reader in understanding the basic concepts of each work, as well as understanding how the literature has developed and is inter-related. This investigation of the literature will describe how the works are similar, and differ, from both a theoretical and research perspective.

A. EARLY WORKS ON SELF-ESTEEM

Early works which discuss self-esteem are often not considered to be works on the topic, per se, but rather deal

with the subject as a consideration of the self. Discussions of self-esteem could also be found within topics such as productivity, satisfaction and motivation. It was thus relegated to secondary status, recognized to be an important and fundamental trait of one's personality but too broad and unscientific to be pursued. More recently, the topic is also found addressed by each of its component terms or a myriad of other terms based on the self; such as respect, efficacy, ego, evaluation, concept, interest, and image.

In developing an understanding of self-esteem, we find the history and the magnitude of the task to be complex. Several areas of this history section draw upon the characterization of the literature presented by Bednar, Wells, and Peterson (1989), and Tharenou (1979).

William James (1890) considered that the self, psychologically, is comprised of the attributes, or "pretensions," the individual seeks. The individual's level of self-esteem is then derived from the number of successes relative to those pretensions.

I, who for the time have staked my all on being a psychologist, am mortified if others know much more psychology than I. But I am contented to wallow in the grossest ignorance of Greek. My deficiencies there give me no sense of personal humiliation at all. Had I "pretensions" to be a linguist, it would have been just the reverse. ...Our self-feeling in this world depends entirely on what we back ourselves to be and do. It is determined by the ratio of our actualities to our supposed potentialities; a fraction of which our pretensions are the denominator, the numerator our successes; thus, self-esteem = successes/pretensions. (James, 1890, as cited in Bednar, Wells, Peterson, 1989, p. 19)

James considered there to be three major components of the self: material, social, and spiritual. The material self involves objects and possessions with which an individual identifies. The social self is a person's reputation and recognition. There are multiple facets to the social self, corresponding to the groups and relationships of the individual. The third self identified was the spiritual self. This is the inner or subjective being.

James, as other writers of the time, considered there to be an inner being, a center which maintained continuity over time. This he called the spiritual self. It is the other components of the self which are evaluated by the successes/pretensions equation he proposed. Yet, those other components are ultimately governed and evaluated by this core spiritual self.

Charles Cooley (1902) considered the social aspects of self-esteem to be of primary importance. Cooley also mentioned other aspects of the self, such as those proposed by James, but he considered the social self the most demanding and dominating. This social self is developed from the individual's observations of social reactions, or a mirroring of the self. Positive feedback and reactions increase the self-esteem, and vice versa.

This theory presented three steps involved in the process of developing self-esteem. First, the perception is made of how one must appear to others. Then the individual interprets

how the other would evaluate this perception. Finally, the individual considers their own response to the perceived evaluation. These three steps could be characterized as: "How do I appear to this person," "What does this person think about me (because of my appearance)," and "I feel (gratified, embarrassed, angry, etc...) toward myself because of this encounter." (Bednar, Wells & Peterson, 1989, p. 25)

In comparison to James, Cooley proposed that an individual was much more reactive, basically forming their self beliefs on the opinions of others. James's theory allowed an individual to remove from their list of pretensions anything they could not control. The individual could thereby, avoid any equation that would result in low marks, by the proper choice of goals and pretensions.

How pleasant is the day when we give up striving to be young or slender. "Thank God!" we say, "those illusions are gone." (James, 1890, as cited in Bednar, Wells, Peterson, 1989, p. 20)

George Herbert Mead's (1934) theory of the self built directly upon Cooley's work. Mead was a sociologist and his theory was not directly concerned with self-esteem, but rather appropriate socialization. He theorized that it was social interaction processes which developed the self. The self was an unemotional being, an object, which would eventually develop to consider itself as "significant others" considered it. In this way, Mead's theory was less personal and more analytical than Cooley's.

The process to which I have just referred, of responding to one's self as another responds to it, taking part in one's own conversation with others, being aware of what one is saying and using that awareness of what one is saying to determine what one is going to say thereafter - that is a process with which we are all familiar. (Mead, 1934, as cited by Strauss, 1964, p. 205)

Both Cooley and Mead theorized that self-esteem was dependent on the environment which esteemed the individual. In either case, an individual would eventually see themselves with adoration, or contempt, as a reflection of how they were treated.

Alfred Adler (1964, 1979) was a practicing psychiatrist fundamentally interested in understanding abnormal behavior. While he did not mention self-esteem, he also theorized that social interaction was critical to an individual's mental health. As a phenomenologist, Adler believed that the individual's view of social interaction constructed a creative self. Early in life, the creative self chooses a style, or process, by which it will evaluate events and guide the self to its goals. If this style and goals are socially acceptable, that individual will be healthy.

Adler was also responsible for the term inferiority complex. He presented that all people will at times have doubts concerning themselves, their abilities or their life, and struggle with these feelings of inferiority. These feelings could act as motivators in an healthy individual. The inferiority complex is qualitatively different, more pervasive and chronic. The individual no longer desires to

overcome the inferiority, rather accepts it in the belief that it is caused by something outside their control.

To be a human being means to have inferiority feelings. One recognizes one's own powerlessness in the face of nature. But in the mentally healthy this inferiority feeling acts as a motive for productivity, as a motive for attempting to overcome obstacles, to maintain oneself in life. Only the oversized inferiority feeling, which is to be regarded as a failure in upbringing, burdens the character with oversensitivity, leads to egotistical self-considerations and self-reflections, lays foundations for neurosis with all its known symptoms which let life become a torture. (Adler, 1979, as cited in Bednar, Wells, Peterson, 1989, p. 26)

Adler, as many of the other early theorists, did not directly address self-esteem. In fact, he considered the dedicated efforts to increase personal self-esteem, as well as a chronic inferiority complex, to be indications of neurosis. Proper self-esteem was more akin to self-acceptance, a term Adler used to identify the courage to be imperfect. Therefore, self-esteem was a person's acceptance of the right to belong to society and to contribute to its social interests.

A. H. Maslow (1943, 1954, 1970) considered self-esteem to be one of the "higher order needs" in his theory of Human Motivation, or Need-Hierarchy. He proposed that motivation occurs in the desire to have needs satisfied. Further, lower level needs are pursued and satisfied first, and then higher levels are pursued and satisfied as the lower levels are reasonably satisfied. In this model, self-esteem was a

motivational factor and need after physiological, safety, and social needs had been met.

All people in our society (with a few pathological exceptions) have a need or desire for a stable, firmly based, (usually) high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem, and for the esteem of others. By firmly based self-esteem, we mean that which is soundly based upon real capacity, achievement and respect from others.

Satisfaction of the self-esteem needs leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and the adequacy of being useful and necessary in the world. But thwarting of these needs produces feeling of inferiority, of weakness, and of helplessness. These feelings in turn give rise to either basic discouragement or else compensatory or neurotic trends. An appreciation of the necessity of basic self-confidence and the understanding of how helpless people are without it, can be easily gained from a study of severe traumatic neurosis. (Maslow, 1943, p. 143-144)

Maslow broke the need of self-esteem into two sets. First was the desire for strength, achievement, adequacy, confidence, independence and freedom. The second set included esteem from others; reputation, prestige, recognition, attention, importance and appreciation. This second set are many of the same needs brought out by Alder in consideration of the social interest.

It is interesting to note that Maslow addressed the need for self-esteem as having a prerequisite, the filling of the need for love (social need). He described the social needs as love, affection and belonging. Many clinical studies of the time had been made on the need for love and they knew more about it perhaps than any of the other needs, except the physiological ones. (Maslow and Mittelmann, 1941) Many of

these social needs may also have fit into what he identified as the second category of self-esteem, esteem from others. This overlapping, or reversing, of the two needs was even addressed by Maslow. However, he felt that those seeking self-esteem before love, reversing the steps of the hierarchy, were doing so as a means to an end: the fulfilling of self-esteem was done for the sake of love.

Within this theory, Maslow was primarily concerned with the motivational aspects of needs. In that way, he did not present a theory of self-esteem, but considered it a need to be fulfilled, and a vital component of an individual. However, consistent with many of the other theorists, he believed that unfulfillment of self-esteem would lead to psychological disorder in the individual. Maslow was also a psychologist who was concerned about how people could become psychologically healthy. The top need in his hierarchy, the attainment of human potential (self-actualization), required that self-esteem also be present. He felt that self-esteem was a need which could be filled, that individuals could control their self-esteem.

Carl Rogers (1951) proposed that individuals live in a world of their own perceptions, and filter all inputs to their world through a lens of their personal perceptions. As in Allport's theory, Roger's theory considers the initial development of the self in the recognition of body awareness, what is "me" and what is "not me". Yet, as the self develops,

outside influences may conflict with what the self values. An example may be correction from parents, admonishing the child not to do something the child currently enjoys doing. The conflict between the self and the outside influence may cause the child to distrust the internal self and adopt, or "introject" these new values as their own. Thus, the perceived self develops as a combination of direct experiences and these "introjects".

It is here, it seems, that the individual begins on a pathway which he later describes as "I don't really know myself." The primary sensory and visceral reactions are ignored, or not permitted into consciousness, except in distorted form. The values which might be built upon them cannot be admitted to awareness. (Rogers, 1951, as cited in Bednar, Wells, Peterson, 1989, pp. 32-33)

When a perception comes into this world which is significantly different than how the self is developed, the self can ignore it or distort it. It thereby begins to narrow what it can accept. If the amount of variance between incoming perceptions and the self becomes great, tension and anxiety increase. Ignoring the variance provides for short term satisfaction, from feelings of protection. However, this is at the cost of long term dissatisfaction, from the continuing need to remain on guard.

Gordon Allport (1961) examined the development process of self-esteem. He proposed that the self develops "body awareness" in the first year of life; a sense of continuity of identity over time in the second year; and a sense of self-esteem beginning in the third year. The self-image and a

consideration of one's possessions as a part of the self is enhanced from age 3 - 6. The ability to consolidate the multiple aspects of the self into a single, cohesive identity occurs with cognitive maturity during the adolescent years. The final phase in the development process is what Allport titled "proprie striving", deriving a sense of purpose and goal orientation for life.

Allport titled two aspects of the self: "proprium" and the "knower". The proprium are all the elements a person learns about the self. The knower is the part which has observed and organized these into the identity.

The vital contribution of his work to self-esteem is in consideration of the psychological defenses. He considered the method and process of these defenses fundamental to the determination of normal or abnormal behavior. The crossover to neurotic behavior comes with their misuse.

A central issue within this theory is the consideration of confronting versus escaping. Adler had already raised this issue when considering how an individual would cope with the needs of society. Adler proposed that if an individual predominantly avoided contributing to the social interest, it would produce the inferiority complex. Allport took this belief a degree further by describing confronting as healthy and escapism, as a dominant activity, abnormal. The ability to confront and cope with a weakness is part of a growth process. Weaknesses then can become motivational issues

rather than destructors. Utilization of escape, i.e. meditation, daydreaming, relaxation techniques, should only be done when the dominate process is confrontation.

Allport was really the first to present the overriding importance of an individual's own discipline and courage. The individual has the choice of how to confront the information they perceive. Whereas James allowed one to change their perceptions and self-esteem by altering their range of perception and their goals, Allport stressed the danger in this type of avoidance. His theories on the self and self-esteem were grounded on the individual's ability for learning and choice, and the belief that these were within the individual's sphere of control. In this, his theory was also much more personal then the theories of Cooley or Mead.

Abraham Korman (1966, 1969, 1970, 1976) described individuals self-esteem as the extent to which they think themselves to be competent (personal adequacy) and to have achieved need satisfaction in the past. He proposed that there are three sources, or types, of self-esteem. The first, chronic self-esteem, is the persistent personality. This would be similar to a core or central self already presented by some of the other theorists. The second is task specific self-esteem and, as the name implies, it is the competence felt within a specific task. The last is socially influenced self-esteem, which is dependent on the feelings the individual has of other's expectations. This third area proposed that

when others expected an individual to perform well, and this was communicated, then the individual's level of competence would increase.

Basically, the high self-esteem person seems to look at himself and say "I like what I see and I am going to give it its desires and needs," whereas the low self-esteem person seems to say, when looking at himself "I do not like what I see and I am not going to give it its desires and needs." (Korman, 1969, p. 191)

Korman's theory presented an exceptionally comprehensive basis for future work on organizational self-esteem. His extensive research, the results of which will be brought out later, showed how self-esteem can act as a variable in vocational choice. His works considered the multifaceted aspects of self-esteem discussed by a number of the other theorists and maintained that, while self-esteem was influenced by environmental factors, it most directly correlated to the individual's own personality. In this, his theory differed from the theories of Cooley and Mead. An organization would therefore have the ability to influence task-specific and social self-esteem. While socially influenced and task specific self-esteem would seem to be the most applicable forms of self-esteem to this thesis, subsequent research has only partially supported this part of his theory.

Unlike many of the theories proposed by sociologists, Korman's theory did not address whether one of the facets of self-esteem takes precedence or is dominant over the other

types. While he did consider a component of self-esteem, chronic self-esteem, to be a persistent personality trait, he did not present it to be the dominating facet.

Korman also used the term "ego-enhancement" as defined by the seeking of outcomes at any given point in time which are of greater value than one sees equitable by one's self-evaluation (Korman, 1976, p. 60-61). This desire for positive inequality was presented as a source of motivation. The actions which would be generated to achieve the heightened, positive outcomes could increase performance and motivation.

Rollo May (1983) investigated self-esteem from the standpoint of what he termed "being"; which he identified as far more than just another term for the self. "Being" was a sense of one's totality as a separate and unique person, a pattern of potentialities. He considered this form of self-concept to be the pivotal difference between mental health and neurosis. He felt that everyone had a need to be aware of their being.

The sense of being gives a person a basis for a self-esteem which is not merely the reflection of others' views about him. For if your self-esteem must rest in the long run on social validation, you have not self-esteem, but a more sophisticated form of social conformity. (May, 1983, as cited in Bednar, Wells, Peterson, 1989, p. 31)

When an individual begins not to accept certain aspects of their being, regression occurs. Thus, they begin to narrow their acceptable existence. This is similar to the conflict noted by Rogers or the avoidance brought out by Allport. This

neurotic sense of non-being is also exacerbated by individuals who attempt to please others by conforming to them, and thereby further deny their own being. In this sense, his theory is similar to the social theories propounded by Cooley and Mead. Further, he felt this internal conflict and anxiety was uniquely human.

The anxiety a person feels when someone he respects passes him on the street without speaking, for example, is not as intense as the fear he experiences when the dentist seizes the drill to attack a sensitive tooth. But the gnawing threat of the slight on the street may hound him all day long and torment his dreams at night, whereas the feeling of fear, though it was quantitatively greater, is gone for the time being as soon as he steps out of the dentists chair. The difference is that the anxiety strikes at the central core of his self-esteem and his sense of value as a self, which is the most important aspect of his experience of himself as a being. (May, 1983, as cited in Bednar, Wells, Peterson, 1989, p. 30)

May felt that the greatest threat to one's self-esteem was the risk of not recognizing ones self-concept, and/or modifying this being for any reason away from what is authentically perceived. It is the disparity and its associated anxiety/shame that May identified with low self-esteem. Therefore, high self-esteem will exist with those who have a recognized and accepted self concept. This aspect of the theory is similar to Roger's, as both theories propose that self-esteem depends on developing and maintaining an authentic self.

Up to this point, we have reviewed many of the significant historical contributions to the literature on self-esteem. We will now present some of the more recent contributions.

B. CONTEMPORARY WORKS ON SELF-ESTEEM

Much contemporary work on self-esteem, while building on earlier work, emphasized the importance of disparity, self-efficacy, and the impact of avoidance or coping. These three specific areas will now be reviewed. The impact of avoidance and coping on self-esteem is of particular interest; many of the concepts discussed in that section will be incorporated in the framework of self-esteem presented in the next chapter.

1. Disparity Theories

Within many of the contemporary theories of self-esteem, a recurring area of analysis is the variance between individuals' perceptions of their selves, and also the variance to what others perceive of them. In general, these are often referred to as disparity models. The contemporary consideration of disparity differs from some of the earlier theories wherein different facets of the self were considered, yet these differences were considered to merely provide inputs to the singular self of the individual. In some cases, the theorist even considered one facet to be the dominating factor within the singular self. The differences noted between the multiple identities of the self are often seen within disparity theories as conflict, discomfort and an initiation for low self-esteem.

Morris Rosenberg (1979) spent a great deal of time on studies of adolescent self-esteem. One of his significant

contributions was an attitude survey administered to over 5,000 high school students. Information regarding social conditions and the subjective experiences of enhanced or diminished self-esteem were drawn from this survey. He proposed that there exists more than one classification of the self. The "extant" self is the way in which one privately sees the self; the "presenting" self is the self one attempts to show to others; and the "desired" self is the self one would like to be. The extant self was further defined as being made up of self-confidence and self-esteem.

Self-confidence is the general sense of control of the self and the environment as well as an expectation of success. Self-esteem is more of an affirmative sense of acceptance and feeling of self-worth. Rosenberg posited that confidence may contribute to esteem, but they were not the same. An individual may expect to overcome a situation and have a success, but that event may not matter or be perceived as being worthy of respect or esteem. The definition that will be presented in the next chapter will incorporate this understanding.

Rosenberg also further analyzed the "desired" self and proposed that it had "idealized", "moral", and "committed" components. The committed component was the type of self one actually perceived being able to achieve. He noted that it is the moral self where the values and standards of the individual were maintained, and that they existed more in the

sense of a standard than as an identity. However, he noted that when an individual acted in such a way to go against these values, there was a damaging disparity within the individual.

Rosenberg felt that the disparity between the moral self and the other selves caused the greatest damaging effects on self-esteem. A particularly striking example of condemnation which can follow when one goes against one's own standards was revealed by Rosenberg; a soldier who fled when under fire subsequently commits suicide. Ironically, he kills himself as punishment for being afraid of being killed (as cited in Bednar, Wells, and Peterson, 1989, p.38).

A contextual dissonance hypothesis, which proposed that individuals who perceive themselves to be different from the majority of people in their environment develop lower self-esteem, was also supported by Rosenberg (1979). In that study, children raised in a religiously dissonant setting (Jews in a non-Jewish neighborhood, Catholics in a non-Catholic neighborhood) had lower self-esteem than children raised in neighborhoods consistent with their own religious beliefs. Zanna, Crosby & Lowenstein (1987) found similar results when considering women working in predominantly male environments.

When considering the social impact that environment has on the developmental process of self-esteem, one might expect that significant differences in levels of self-esteem

would be caused by differences in social standing. This reasoning could be that if the individual has more exposure to success and attainment, and to subsequent feelings of competence, than an individual from a lower social class, they would then develop higher self-esteem. However, this reasoning would only follow if the individuals directly interacted with others outside their representative social class. The direct determinant would be how the individual is treated in their environment.

Social class may have indirect impact on self-esteem in organizations if, and only if, it influences the immediate psychological nature of the work environment (Kohn & Schooler, 1983). Other work related factors, such as supervision practices and work autonomy, were shown to predict self-esteem better than social class. This developmental consideration was brought out by Rosenberg drawing on the weak, or non existent, correlation of social class and global self-esteem, "if significant others neither look up nor down on the child by virtue of his socioeconomic status, then adopting the viewpoints of these others, his objective socioeconomic status should have little impact upon his feeling of self-worth" (Rosenberg, 1979, p. 137). Thus, in each of the context disparity models, it is pivotal to understand the object of reference. How the reference group is determined could then have a great impact on the determination of worth, and therefore have projected effects on self-esteem.

The disparity theories continued with the works of Higgins and associates (Higgins, Klein, & Strauman, 1985). Their theory also proposes three conceptions of the self which were similar to Rosenberg's. The "actual" self is the doer and performer of activities. The "ideal" self is a fantasy self which has all ideal attributes. The "ought" self is what the individual reasonably expects to achieve, similar to Rosenberg's committed self. The disparity between these facets is a source of discomfort. More exactly, they proposed that discouragement correlated with disparity between actual and ideal, while anxiety correlated with disparity between actual and ought. It was assumed within their theory that chronic disparity between any of the self-concepts would yield a pervasive negative self-esteem.

It is worth noting here that current disparity theories appear to be at odds with the ego-enhancing motivational factor considered by Korman (1976). Recall that he proposed that an individual would seek those outcomes with a greater value than the self currently evaluated. In his hypothesis, this disparity was proposed as a source of motivation and higher self-esteem, not as a source of anxiety, now proposed to lower self-esteem.

Greenwald and Breckler (1985) have developed a disparity theory that is more focused on developmental stages. They proposed that a "diffuse" self occurs early in life, as a self centered on pleasure and survival. As the child grows

in self-consciousness, it develops a "public" self which recognizes that pleasure often comes from pleasing others. This social driven self is the basis from which personal values and a sense of the self apart from the public are derived, developing the "private" self. The individual may continue to develop a final self as part of a group identity. This "collective" self is not concerned with recognition, personal pleasure or needs, as the other selves would indicate, but is rather concerned with advancing the group's goals.

Again, disparity may exist between the facets of the self causing discomfort and/or dissatisfaction. The collective self may act in such a way to support the reference group, but not meet the desires of the private or public self. In fact, the action may be at the cost of violating a personal value or social condemnation from outside the reference group. This disparity and conflict is thought to be a major source of low self-esteem.

Another facet of disparity theories was considered by Schlenker (1985). His theory considered the disparity between a global consideration of a self-concept and the self-concept of a given situation or at a certain moment. This "situated identity" may come about when an individual attempts to fit in with a given social environment. If the disparity between this tailored self-concept and the global self-concept

continues over time, it reflects a lack of integrity of the self.

This disparity differs from the "introjects" discussed earlier by Carl Rogers. In Roger's theory, the introjects from others were formed into the singular self-concept of the individual. These may not be in agreement with the individuals perceptions and beliefs of the self. Schlenker proposed a disparity between a self-concept of a given situation and the self-concept from a generalized identity.

2. Self-efficacy

Another aspect of contemporary work is found in the behavioral approach to self-esteem. Albert Bandura (1977) noted the importance of cognitive processes in behavioral change. Bandura's concept of self-efficacy was an individual's expectation of success when meeting a challenge. This expectation was based on their cognition of having the required abilities to overcome the challenge. The stronger the self-efficacy, the greater the effort and more persistent in coping when hardship arises. The lower the self-efficacy, the more likely the individual will avoid the challenge if possible, or give up once into it. The self-fulfilling aspects of this type of process are obvious.

The cognitive process of self-efficacy described by Bandura (1986) would directly impact the self-concept and self-esteem of an individual. Bandura went a step further to

describe a potential for therapy to improve, or strengthen, self-efficacy. Four sources which could influence self-efficacy are vicarious experience or modeling, performance accomplishments, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal.

While self-efficacy is not the same as self-esteem, Bandura's work is an important consideration for the performance component of self-esteem. In this light, his theory would be extremely helpful in dealing with specific aspects or situational self-esteem, even if limited in application to global self-esteem.

Nathaniel Branden also considered the role of self-efficacy. He is considered by some to be the father of modern self-esteem therapy. His greatest contribution to the field is not in research, but in his clinical practice and writings. His writings were not on research, but did much to popularize the topic of self-esteem.

Branden feels that there is no more important value-judgement, no factor more important in psychological development or motivation than self-esteem (Branden, 1971, p. 109). He defined self-esteem as the integrated sum of self-efficacy and self-respect, or personal worth. Self-efficacy means having a confidence in your ability to think and in the processes by which you judge, choose, and decide. He further includes knowing and understanding ones interests and needs and self-trust and self-reliance.

Self-respect, the second additive of self-esteem, is the assurance of your values; an affirmative attitude toward the right to live and be happy, the freedom to assert your thoughts, wants, needs, and joys. (Branden, 1971, pp. 113-114) This concept of self-esteem, which is utilized in his therapy efforts, is similar to, and based on, the concept which was developed together with Ayn Rand years previously (Rand, 1957, pp. 1018, 1056-1057).

3. Avoidance and Coping

Within the realm of therapy, Bednar, Wells, and Peterson (1989) provide a clear coupling of their theory of self-esteem to their clinical practices. They conclude that an individual's self-esteem is based on the feedback the self receives. It is primarily influenced and based on the individual's internal self-evaluations. In this aspect, it agrees and builds on the theory of Korman. The self-evaluations are based on the cognitive awareness of the self and the affective experience that accompanies this awareness. Self-evaluations, in their usage, are based on what are considered valid self-perceptions; a continuous process of noticing, monitoring, and thinking about one's behavior, thoughts and feelings.

Self-evaluation goes beyond and differs from self-talk, a term which has gained popularity recently. Self-talk is mostly the personal awareness of the beliefs used in

relation to the self. These act as psychological triggers to activate inhibitors to behavior and performance. Consequently, many of the theories on self-talk propose that negative feelings and emotional inhibitors can be removed by identifying and eliminating irrational beliefs, values, and sentences from self-talk. However, Bednar, et al, point out that such theory makes the assumption that the perceptions are without foundation and can be removed (Bednar, et al, p. 108-111). Self-evaluations are considered to be based on at least partially valid self-perceptions.

Self-evaluations are the primary basis for self-esteem, and can result in positive or negative evaluations. They propose that the core element of positive evaluations is coping, and that avoidance leads to negative evaluations. This aspect of their theory, avoidance and coping, is embodied into the definition and framework that will be presented in the next chapter.

In presenting their theory, Bednar and associates build on the theories of Allport and Bandura, already presented.

...the psychological processes involved in avoidance are qualitatively different from those involved in coping. Avoidance is basically a form of denial and escape that requires distortions of thinking and perception. These processes virtually preclude the possibility of personal growth and development because of the inadequacies inherent in these responses. (Bednar, Wells, & Peterson, 1989 p. 77)

...favorable self-evaluations are the inevitable result of coping. Inherent in coping responses are higher levels of risk taking, personal responsibility, and human growth,

which are more satisfying psychological responses to anxiety and conflicts. (Bednar, Wells, & Peterson, 1989 p. 107-108)

C. RESEARCH ON SELF-ESTEEM IN ORGANIZATIONS

To this point the thesis has presented some of the theories that underlie the literature. It will now present a synopsis of the research that has been performed in presenting the relationships of self-esteem to organizational considerations.

Most of the relevant research on employee self-esteem was summarized in a review article by Tharenou (1979). The summary of research was organized into broad categories, including intrinsic and extrinsic job characteristics, as well as behavior correlates. These are provided in Tables 1 through 3.

Intrinsic job characteristics are ones which consider the extent to which a job is varied, skilled, involves learning, involves participation in decision making and is associated with role stressors, such as ambiguity or overload. Extrinsic factors consider the economic context in which the work is performed, such as pay and job level, and those variables relevant to the interpersonal context, such as the nature of the social relationships in the organization. Overall, the relationship of self-esteem is stronger and more consistent for intrinsic job characteristics than for extrinsic characteristics.

An issue brought out by Tharenou, and also addressed by a number of researchers, is that self-esteem is both a dependent and independent variable (Tharenou, 1979, p. 322, 341). Most of the studies summarized are correlational field studies, in which causality is not clearly established. Studies such as those within the tables have determined that relationships exist between self-esteem and other variables. However, it is not always clear which is the dependent variable. Nor is the concept and underlying theory distinctly presented in every case along with the research.

Korman (1977) concluded that work environments with typically hierarchical authority structure, routinization of activities, and specialization of job tasks, will encourage the growth of low self-esteem. Organizations that are more democratic, not routinized and not specialized, will allow self-esteem to increase. Self-esteem would therefore be the dependent variable. Yet, Korman also states that individuals with high self-esteem, compared to those with low self-esteem, will be motivated to engage in effective performance, and will perform to the extent that an incentive is contingent on work performance. Self-esteem would now be a moderator or an independent variable.

As shown in Table 3, global self-esteem has not been shown to be related to work performance. However, most studies have considered global self-esteem. It is expected that greater

relationships would be revealed if task or situational self-esteem were analyzed.

The theories and research presented provide for general understanding of self-esteem. This understanding is useful to move forward in comprehension to a framework for self-esteem in organizations.

Table 1
Studies of Relationships Between Intrinsic Job Characteristics and Self-Esteem

<i>Type of Self-esteem</i>	<i>Experimenters</i>	<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Situational Variables</i>	<i>Results</i>
Global	Kohn & Schooler, 1973	3101 U.S. male workers, representative sample	Closeness of supervision, job complexity (dealing with things, ideas, people), routinization of work, time pressure	X*
	Kornhauser, 1965	407 male automobile workers	Job interest, job skill, routinization of work	X
	Vroom, 1962	399 male oil refinery and manufacturing workers	Job complexity (autonomy, learning, skill)	X
Work role	Beehr, 1976	651 white- and blue-collar supervisors and workers	Autonomy, role ambiguity	X
	French & Caplan, 1972	205 male administrators, scientists, and engineers	Participation, qualitative role overload Quantitative role overload	X n.s.
	French, Tupper, & Mueller, 1965	104 male university professors	Qualitative role overload	X
	Hackman & Lawler, 1971	208 telephone company employees	Job content (variety, autonomy, feedback, task identity)	X
	Hite, 1975	Subsample of probability sample of U.S. workers	Job challenge (skill, autonomy, learning)	X
	Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek & Rosenthal, 1964	725 U.S. workers, representative sample	Role ambiguity	X
	Levitan, 1970	Kibbutz workers	Autonomy	X
	Margolis, Kroes & Quinn, 1975	1496 U.S. workers, representative sample	Role ambiguity, qualitative overload, participation	X
	Argyris, 1960	124 manufacturing employees	Job skill	X
	Gardell, 1971	303 male engineering and pulp and paper workers	Work complexity (skill, autonomy, variety, social interaction)	X
Sense of competence	Gardell, 1973	370 lumberjacks	Work monotony (autonomy, mechanization)	X

Source: Tharenou 1979, p.326.

*X indicates a significant relationship, n.s. a nonsignificant one.

Table 2
Studies of Relationships Between Extrinsic Job Characteristics and Self-esteem

<i>Type of Self-esteem</i>	<i>Experimenters</i>	<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Situational Variables</i>	<i>Results</i>
Global	Bachman & O'Malley, 1977	1608 young U.S. males, representative sample	Occupational status	X*
	Bowers, 1963	347 male foremen and manufacturing employees	Supervisor support	X
	Gavin, 1973	367 insurance managerial candidates	Job level	n.s.
	Ghiselli, 1963	416 white- and blue-collar workers	Occupational level	— ^b
	Jacques & Chason, 1977	805 Florida adults, representative sample	Occupational status	n.s.
	Kohn & Schooler, 1973	2101 U.S. male workers, representative sample	Job security, dirtiness of the work, job level, income, ownership	n.s.
	Kornhauser, 1965	407 male automobile workers	Job level Supervisory style, pay	X n.s.
	Lefkowitz, 1967	179 manufacturing workers	Pay, seniority	n.s.
Work role	Beehr, 1976	651 white- and blue-collar supervisors and workers	Supervisor support Group support	X n.s.
	Ghiselli & Johnson, 1970	413 managers	Promotion (flat organization)	X
	Hall & Nougaim, 1968	49 young managerial trainees	Length of time in job, promotion, pay	X
	Hite, 1975	Subsample of probability sample of U.S. workers	Group support	X
	Kasl & French, 1962	725 male supervisors and manufacturing workers	Pay	X
	Klein & Weiner, 1977	54 middle managers	Pay	n.s.
	Quinn & Shepard, 1974	1496 U.S. workers, representative sample	Job level, job type	n.s.
	Porter, 1962	1958 managers of all levels	Job level	X
Sense of competence	Gardell, 1971	303 male engineering and pulp and paper workers	Social interaction, amount of pay, pay schedule	X
	Kipnis & Lane, 1962	77 Navy petty officers	Autocratic leadership style	X

Source: Tharenou 1979, p. 329

*X indicates a significant relationship, n.s. a nonsignificant one.

^bSignificance level not tested.

Table 3
Behavioral Correlates of Employee Self-esteem

<i>Type of Self-esteem</i>	<i>Experimenters</i>	<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Results</i>
Global	Beatty, 1975	23 female clerical workers,	Performance	n.s.*
	Kerr Inkson, 1978	93 male meat workers	Performance	n.s.
	Lefkowitz, 1967	179 manufacturing workers	Absences, dispensary visits	n.s.
	Lied & Prichard, 1976	146 male air force trainers	Performance	n.s.
	London & Klimoski, 1975	153 female nurses	Performance	n.s.
	Mishken, 1973	71 female stenographers	Performance	n.s.
	Vroom, 1962	399 oil refinery and manufacturing workers	Absenteeism	n.s.
Work role	Hackman & Lawler, 1971	208 telephone company employees	Performance, absenteeism	n.s.
	Kasl & French, 1962	725 male supervisors and manufacturing workers	Dispensary visits	X
	Quinn & Shepard, 1974	1496 U.S. workers, representative sample	Propensity to leave	X
Sense of competence	Gardell, 1973	370 lumberjacks	Propensity to leave	X
	Ekpo-ufot, 1976	156 male automobile workers	Labor turnover Performance (self ratings)	X
	Morse, 1976	123 male managers of all levels	Performance	X

Source: Tharenou 1979, p. 333

*X indicates a significant relationship, n.s. a nonsignificant one.

III. A WORKING DEFINITION AND FRAMEWORK FOR SELF-ESTEEM

The brief history just presented has shown a glimpse of the progress that has been made in the topic of self-esteem in past years. However, an agreed upon definition has yet to be achieved; this is as true among novices as among experts.

Many writers on self-esteem maintain their own personal definition. Others have not clearly addressed what exactly it is that they refer to, and use the subject as a general, all encompassing, personality trait. Yet, self-esteem must be properly and competently defined for the manager, otherwise we run the same risk as the blind men describing an elephant; each partially describing the elephant based on the part of the elephant they touched. These types of effort create an incomplete and inaccurate vision of the topic at hand.

In a desire to address the intended managerial audience, the definition developed here will avoid higher degrees of sophistication. Sophistication is used here in the sense of Webster's definition, that it would be intellectually appealing, yet complex and deceptively altered. Rather, the goal is for usable clarity and understanding.

A. A DEFINITION

By this point, it may be apparent at the cursory level that self-esteem is "how much you like yourself." That is

true, but it is also more than that. The definition of self-esteem that will be used in this text is:

Self-esteem is the emotional valuation individuals have of themselves and the degree of certainty of this valuation.

The reader should notice what is included in this definition as well as what is not. Some of the more salient points will now be brought out as the framework of self-esteem is presented.

To begin with, it should be noted that self-esteem is a subjective evaluation that the individual maintains. It may or may not be what logically could be argued or what others perceive to exist in "reality". It is not the worth others determine, by considering the competitive worth an individual has in the competitive marketplace. The self-esteem that exists, when considered from the individual's frame of reference, lies in their own evaluation. This is a case where reality is subjective, and where the subjective evaluation is more important than what could be logically and systematically determined. Self-esteem is the evaluation, spoken or unspoken, which the individual maintains.

Motivation, job satisfaction, and morale have this in common: they are all more emotional than intellectual in nature. The only logic that applies to them is the logic that they are so difficult to understand or cope with. They are personal and subjective. In this context, the psychological real takes precedence over the ontological real. (Cribbin, 1972, p. 155)

B. SELF-ESTEEM VERSUS SELF AND SELF CONCEPT

Next, we should recognize that self-esteem is based upon self concept, but that it goes beyond and is in addition to the individuals' self concept. While self concept is, basically, how individuals perceive themselves, self-esteem is the emotional evaluation of worth that they attach to this identity. It is not uncommon that self-esteem and self concept are intermingled in usage and comprehension. However, we need to grasp the difference and uniqueness of these two individual topics.

Self concept is the descriptive nature of the self and could be thought of by the parameters of clarity, accuracy or reality, for example. Self-esteem is emotional, the sense of worth attached to the description, and could be thought of by the parameters of those feelings. It is important to recognize this fundamental difference. It would be inappropriate to consider ones self-esteem to be inaccurate; for that would be to say that one does not feel how one feels.

This thesis will focus on self-esteem more than on the development, maintenance, or exhaustive details of the self or self-concept. As has been noted, the topics are related and support one another. However, study on the self concept and on the self are separate, extremely interesting topics that will not be covered in any more depth than required, primarily due to the size and complexity of each of the topics.

Figure 1 shows the basic relationship of self to self concept; self-esteem is not yet identified or included. It shows the self and the overlapping self concept. Area 2 is where the individual's perception of the self is clearly based on the self. Areas 1 and 3 reveal disparity. Area 1 is a section the individual has not yet discovered or has not chosen to accept as being part of his/her self concept. Area 3 is a section where the individual perceives, believes or judges the self to be something other than what is actually self.

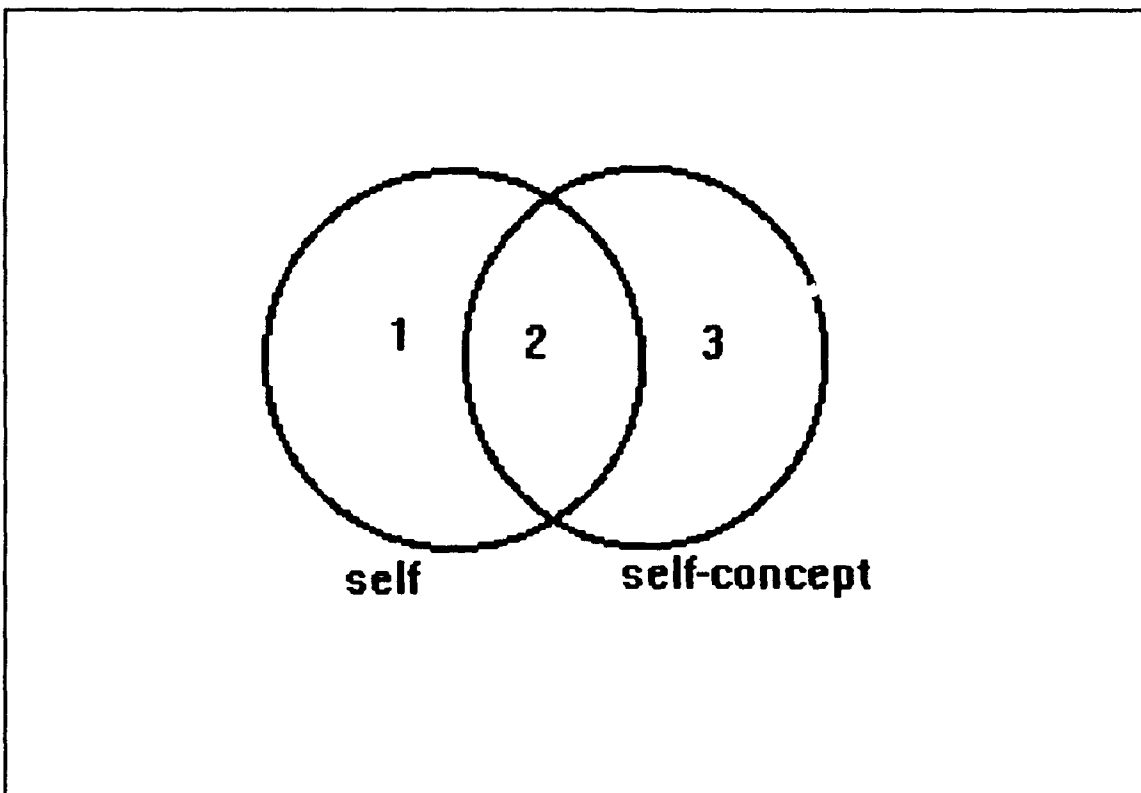


Figure 1. SELF-CONCEPT IN RELATION TO SELF

The pretensions of the self, using the concept as described in the last chapter by William James, are the areas 2 and 3. Recall that by altering these pretensions, one could consciously select those successes and failures that would be considered as part of the individual's self concept. These perceptions may or may not be based on what is the self, areas 1 and 2. If the disparity of area 3 were to become significant, it could lead to tension and anxiety. More will be said on this later.

Figure 2 now incorporates self-esteem onto the framework already analyzed. Note that areas 1, 2 and 3 in Figure 1 are now amplified into areas 1-6 in Figure 2. Areas 4, 5, and 6 are those sections already discussed where the individual now also has emotional worth attached. Area 4 is where the self, the self concept, and self-esteem all reside. In other words, the judgement of the self is clearly based on a discernment and revelation of the self, and the individual emotionally values and identifies with this perception. This is where self-esteem, as identified by the definition, is most explicitly supported.

Areas 1-3 in Figure 2 are those areas that do not matter emotionally to the individual at this time. Area 1, as in Figure 1, is a facet of the self that the individual has not yet accepted or perceived. Area 2, as an example, could be the individual's rate or rank in their profession. It is an identifiable part of the individual, and they perceive it, but

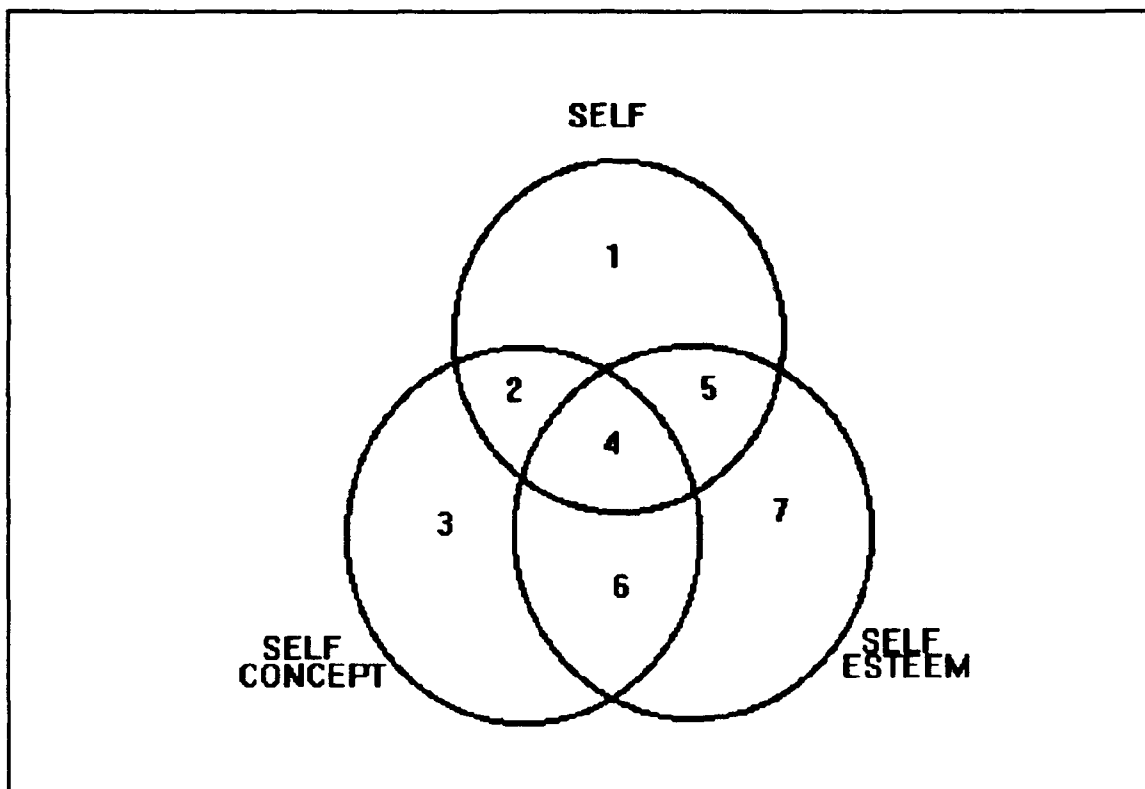


Figure 2. SELF-ESTEEM IN RELATION TO SELF AND SELF-CONCEPT

it does not carry with it any emotional value. Area 3 could include a talent perceived but, not actually held by the individual. An example of this would be a personal belief that they are good delegators of tasks when, in actuality, they do not maintain this talent. However, to the individual, as with areas 1 and 2, the ability to delegate does not carry with it emotional value.

Area 6 is similar to area 3, but the individual now does attach a sense of emotional worth to it. In carrying forward our previous example to this area, it would now matter emotionally if the individual's ability to delegate were

challenged. And as before, the individual does not have the actual ability.

Areas 3 and 6 are areas of discrepancy similar to those which were considered at length by Carl Rogers. As was presented in the historical perspective on Rogers in the last chapter, and mentioned earlier with regard to disparity, the variance between the self and the self concept cause tension and anxiety to build. This is also true for areas 1 and 5. These are areas of the self which the individual does not consider part of their concept, and this may also lead to anxiety.

If a substantial discrepancy exists between the person's organismic experiencing and the self-concept, tension and anxiety build as a result of the conflict between the organism's effort to satisfy its needs and the conscious self's attempt to remain unaware of those needs. The person may feel "like I'm coming undone." (Rogers, 1951, as cited by Bedner, Wells, Peterson, 1989, p.33)

It has been stated numerous times that self-esteem is based on the self concept. A cursory scan of areas 5 and 7 in Figure 2 may appear to contradict this. This is not the case, as further scrutiny will, along with research findings, support the model and the definition.

Studies have revealed that undergraduate students who receive definite, rather than equivocal, statements about their personality felt better about themselves. Importantly, this relationship was true whether the statements were accurate or not. It was suggested by the study that one can have higher or lower self-esteem even if it is based on

erroneous self concepts (Baumgardner, 1989). Referring to Figure 2, the study suggests that receiving definite statements in areas 5 or 7, although they would not fit the individual's self concept, could alter self-esteem.

Area 5 is where an individual has emotional worth attached to an aspect of the self, do not perceive that they maintain that quality, but in reality they do. This builds from the desire described in Rosenberg's theory of the desired self. Rather than describing how the multiple facets of the self are modeled, our model identifies the emotional desire, the esteem, attached to this desired self.

An example of this may be a woman who does not feel she commands respect or professional consideration in the office, when in actuality she does. This is extremely important to her, and the effects on her emotions intense; yet she does not believe or realize that in this case, she already has what she so desperately desires.

Area 7 could be thought of in the realm of fantasy and day-dreams. The individual does not really think that they are actually living the fantasy or in the day-dream. An individual knows he is not the knight in shining armour, or the princess living in the grand tower. But they gain some emotional satisfaction from it; the day-dream is fun and enjoyable to them. It may be their utopia, something they value and desire, yet with the recognition that they are not there.

This facet of area 7 also provides a reason that it may not be best to strive for the complete alignment of the three spheres. It was noted in the previous chapter that even Gordon Allport, who adamantly focused on coping rather than escapism, recognized the recreation in day-dreams, their importance to creativity, and that they could ultimately be constructive. (Allport, 1961, pp. 152-153, 163-164)

C. SELF-ESTEEM VERSUS EGOTISM

Another point needs to be made at this juncture, to identify something which is not part of the framework. Self-esteem as defined is based upon the self concept, a personal evaluation of personal worthiness. However, some have confused it in the past, and used it in the same context, with what may be considered, negatively, egotism. Egotism, in this sense, is comparative in nature, comparing the self to another or to the environment. It typically maintains an exaggerated sense of one's self, "I'm better than...". When self-esteem is confused with this negative connotation of egotism, it is because the definitions are not understood or agreed upon. Again, self-esteem is the belief of worth, confidence, and acceptance attached to the self, not in comparison to others. Self-esteem is basically not comparative or competitive.

This is a significant issue, since many religions have a sense of humility as one of their tenets. This is then used to voice opposition to self-esteem. Humility is basically

understood as a state of treating others with high respect, rather than being vain and exalting one's self. In that regard, humility is incompatible with the superior comparison of one's self to others; it is the antithesis of what was previously indicated as egotistical thoughts and behavior. Humility, then, is not incompatible with self-esteem.

This is another example of why the understanding of the definition is critical. A number of authors utilize the terms ego, egotism, or egoism in relation to the self and self-esteem. Again, the definitions and constructs of each of the terms vary considerably. It is therefore being stressed that, when performing a study within these topics, it is imperative that one understand the basis and definition of the terms the author is using. Failure to understand the distinctions between these terms is one of the great causes of confusion within the literature.

If self-esteem were outwardly competitive, the certainty of the belief would be tentative because it would be based upon whatever comparator was being used at that time. It would be ever changing, higher and lower, depending upon the relative perception of the individual within that environment. In this regard, our definition varies slightly with some of the social psychologists' constructs of self-esteem. Our definition and framework places greater significance on the enduring sense of worthiness, and less on the comparative social impact of situations. The significance of this will be

brought out shortly, and then analyzed again as it applies to organizational settings in the next chapter of the thesis.

Since a belief exists within the mind of an individual, it should be apparent that the individual is the one who has the greatest direct and immediate knowledge of the belief. This does not, however, mean that others cannot determine it. Nor does it mean that the individual has an articulate or developed sense of the belief. When considering this, it again becomes apparent that the testing or measurement of self-esteem could become treacherous, and subject to doubt and attack if its validity is not borne on clear research and theory. This was a primary basis for the stinging reviews of the field of self-esteem research by Wylie in 1974 and 1979.

As will be discussed later, it should also become apparent that the more an individual examines one's self, the more firm one's understanding and beliefs will be. Some 23 centuries ago, Socrates wrote, "The unexamined life is not worth living." The greater the understanding and detailed the examination, the greater potential of recognizing worth, and therefore, an amplified and more enduring basis for self-esteem. In this case, the definition proposed strongly agrees with a point stressed by May; one must have an understanding of him or herself to have self-esteem.

D. GLOBAL VERSUS SITUATIONAL SELF-ESTEEM

Up to this point in analyzing the definition and framework, it has been primarily limited to presenting self-esteem from a global construct. Yet it is more detailed and varied than that. As brought out by numerous authors, self-esteem maintains both global and situational parameters.

The global aspect of self-esteem is the overall consideration an individual maintains of themselves. It is here that the fundamental framework of worth is resident. It is what Korman referred to as chronic self-esteem, the pervasive belief that is maintained without regard to individual situations. This aspect is seldom altered, and then changes are normally slow and minimal. This global aspect is also used to evaluate each unique situation and event to determine the situational self-esteem.

Valuation in our definition refers to an emotional sense of worth, the esteem. This is based within the personal framework of beliefs and values of the individual. As presented earlier, it is an internal evaluation, not outwardly competitive or comparative. However, self-esteem also maintains components related to self-efficacy and self-confidence. Because of this, self-esteem may fluctuate in different situations.

Situational self-esteem is the sense of worth a person believes they have in given situations. Situation could refer to a task, location, or any other parameter. Examples of some

environments that may change an individual's situational self-esteem: when one arrives at the country club or boards the city bus, when an experienced golfer is out on the greens or when a computer illiterate is forced to learn a new computer program, or when someone is around their co-workers or in the office of their supervisor. Each of these situations may or may not cause variations in how individuals perceive their worth or value. In those cases where the self-esteem is not modified by the situation, the global self-esteem is unaltered. In essence, the situational mimics the global. It could also be thought of as saying there is no situational self-esteem in that case, only global. In every case, it is the global self-esteem that provides the framework for the development of situational self-esteem.

This is an area where it is important to maintain a clear understanding of the definition. When the situational aspects of self-esteem begin to be analyzed, it can become easy to form a basis of worth with greater comparative consideration from outside influences. The worth in self-esteem is an internal, personal determination, not a comparative consideration to the environment. This facet of the definition gains increasing importance when situational self-esteem is analyzed.

When considering situational effects of self-esteem, the question of what types of situations lead to higher or lower self-esteem often arises. This thesis agrees with theorists

who proposed that avoidance of situations, especially those associated with fear, leads to lower self-esteem, whereas coping with the situations increases self-esteem. Gordon Allport and Richard Bednar and associates investigated the patterns of feedback and emotional responses generated by coping verses avoidance of situations, particularly those which involve fear and anxiety. Bednar concluded that coping was the primary source for a sense of self-appreciation (Bednar, Wells & Peterson, 1989, p. 118).

Coping is defined as the process of realistically facing up to difficult issues, while avoidance is based on a process of denial, distortion, and self-deception as a means (defense) of avoiding fear and anxiety. It is not proposed that the observation or identification of coping or avoidance behavior categorize an individual. All individuals will at times cope with situations, as they will also at times avoid situations.

It is not the behavior, which others can observe, that is of importance, but the function which the behavior serves. For example, some individuals may currently perform great portions of their work communication via memos and letters. This may be the best effort of one individual at improving their communication skills given their fear of social interaction. For another, they may be avoiding richer forms of communication available. And for others, it may not be a consideration of avoidance or coping at all; it may just be the best process for doing business. It is the human motive

underlying the behavior that is of importance. Therefore, an understanding of the individual motivational constructs is required to understand the self-esteem implications of behavior. This will become an important consideration in the next chapter.

Bednar's investigation concluded that individuals response styles contain varying degrees and mixtures of avoidance and coping;

To the extent these response styles favor coping over avoidance, they tend to engender favorable self-evaluative thoughts and feelings. Conversely, patterns of avoidance can be expected to breed negative self-evaluative thoughts and feelings. These evaluations of the self and the feelings they engender can also be expected to vary from intense to mild. The more extreme the avoidance, the more intense the self-disapproval. The greater the risk and responsibility involved in the coping response, the greater the feelings of self-respect and approval. (Bednar, Wells, & Peterson, 1989, p. 121)

Based on the importance of an individual's perceptions of their actions and reactions to given situations, we provide Figure 3 as a model of the process.

The lines which connect each of the blocks are indicative of the individual's assessments and perceptions. As a situation is encountered, with a given sense of self-esteem, the individual's perception of the situation is carried forward. The importance and meaningfulness of certain situations for a given individual would stimulate various levels of interpretation and perception. Heightened perceptions would then lead to a greater perceived importance of their response (behavior).

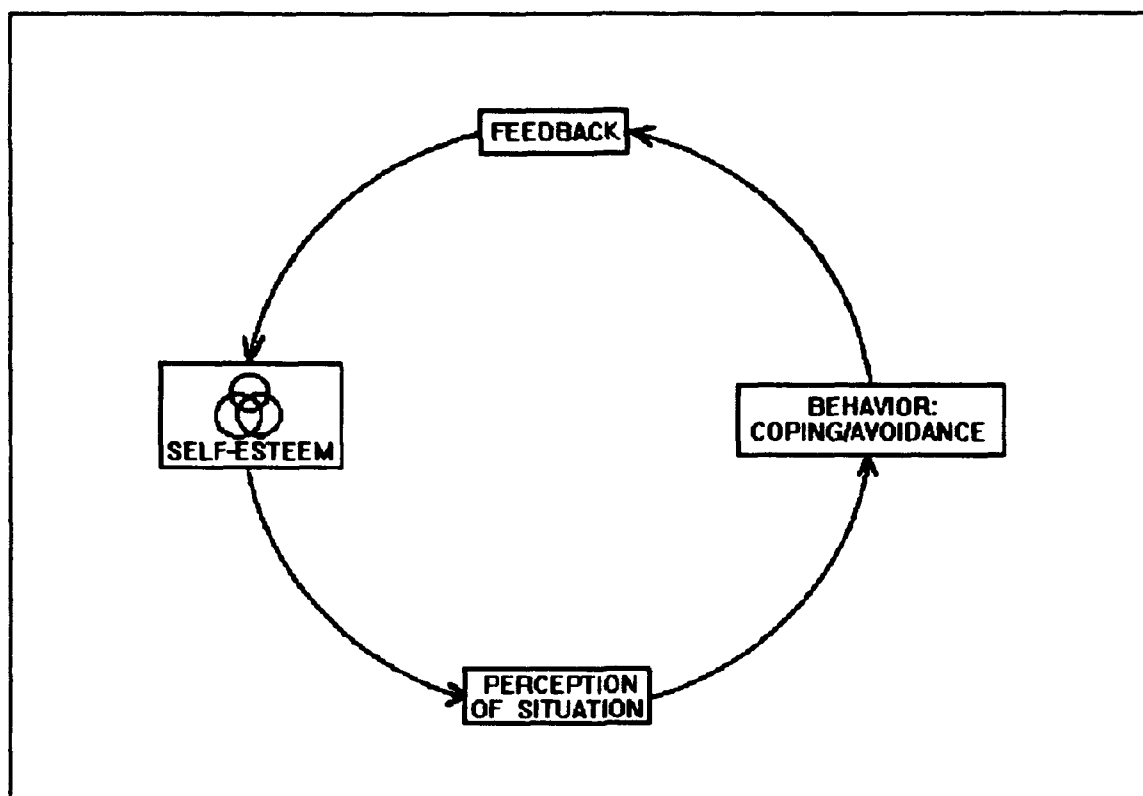


Figure 3. SELF-ESTEEM / COPING CYCLE

It is assumed here that while the global assessment of situations impacts perceptions to some extent, the localized assessment is of greater consequence to the behavior and response. The structure and framework of Figure 2 contains the information the individual has gained from past experiences and situations, but for a new situation, the individual now determines how they fit with that situation. Is this a situation wherein they have competence, are able to add value, does it matter to them, etc... The more meaningful the situation, the more in-depth the analysis and the perception.

This situation may or may not require an observable action by the individual. However, whatever response is generated to the situation, the perception of those actions forms the basis for feedback. Their evaluation of behavior, and their motivation for behavior, forms the input for internal feedback.

Feedback is illustrated as a separate step in the chain linking behavior back to the individual's self-concept and self self-esteem. This is done for a number of reasons. First, self-talk is an intrapersonal consideration. Self-talk is more than the words the individual says to themselves regarding a behavior; it is what it means to them. This self-talk may be realistically based, or it may not. An example of this could be an individual who makes a mistake and then says to themselves, "I'm so stupid". The input to their self-concept and self-esteem is "I'm so stupid" rather than the evaluation that they made a mistake.

Secondly, external feedback to behavior is also encountered in many situations. It is proposed that this form of feedback is less important than internal feedback. External feedback will also be further filtered by the individual's perceptions prior to becoming an input to the individual's psychological identity.

Figure 4 diagrams how the framework could interact in various environments. The framework of an individual and their self-esteem (Figure 2) is generated and established from

their global perceptions: personal awareness, experiences, and values, for example. When an environment is encountered, the framework of the global self-esteem is used in determining how to reference the new environment. However, this new environment does not create a new self, a sort of entity unto the situation. Rather, the perceptions and emotions of the situation become incorporated as a potentially identifiable portion of the global self. The feelings and emotions which may be generated can be then recognized as situational self-esteem.

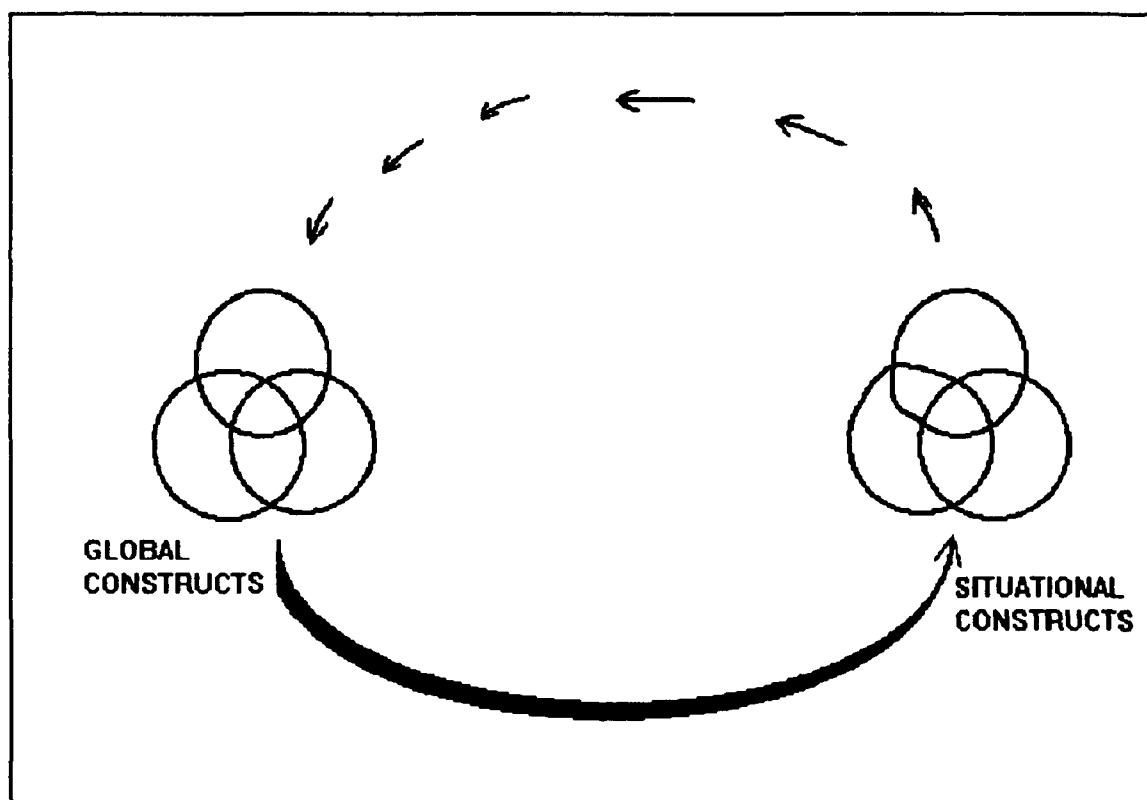


Figure 4. GLOBAL AND SITUATIONAL RELATIONSHIP

It should be noted that the global aspect of self-esteem is not an additive or multiplicative summation of the

situational self-esteem's. While each of the situational self-esteem's will become assimilated in the global self-esteem, it may be better to consider that the global self-esteem primarily formulates how the situational self-esteem is determined. The global self-esteem will be consistent through situations and is the framework utilized for these unique situations.

It should not be construed that this model is at variance with the multiple facets of the self brought out by contemporary researchers. Rather, it builds on the theory. Self-esteem is based on the self-concept. Disparity between facets of the self was presented a source of discomfort, discouragement and anxiety. These feelings and emotions are generated due to a lack of integrity perceived by the individual. When the values generated relative to a given situation contrast significantly with the other values of the individual's self-esteem, the lack of integrity is felt emotionally. The model proposes that this disparity is felt when the unique situational values become incorporated into the individual's self-esteem.

The second portion of our working definition of self-esteem involves the certainty the individual has in his or her belief. This element of the definition addresses how easily individuals are swayed in their beliefs, depending on their surroundings or situations. It also addresses how developed the individual's understanding is of their own feelings.

As presented, self-esteem maintains components which are global as well as situational. However, an individual whose framework allows for extensive flexibility depending on how they match up to other people, situations, or environment will have a significantly different type of self-esteem than an individual who is more rigorous and certain of their core beliefs and framework.

It should be understood that an individual's self-concept and self-esteem is a process, an emotional evaluation. As such, it is not a process which is completed, but ever continuing. Individuals continue to change, and therefore their concept and esteem should also. Yet, as many natural organisms, the change process often tends toward a state of homeostasis. If the self were to continue to change, but the concept and esteem did not, a void and disparity would be established.

A visible example of this is a man attempting to engage in sports as he did earlier in life. His self-concept is founded on how his self used to be, or as he would like to remember his self as being. When he cannot attain the level of his expectation, he feels a loss, accompanied with the aches and pains. The emotional loss is from the void established by an outdated and inaccurate self-concept.

The certainty an individual maintains could be an indicator of the type of environment the individual is most often in. The contextual dissonance hypothesis was presented

earlier, which proposed that individuals who perceive themselves to be different from the majority of people in their environment over time develop lower self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1979).

It is of consequence to recall Rosenberg's study and consider the interaction of global and situational self-esteem. In the study, religion was such an important part of the individual that the framework of global self-esteem was altered by this situational effect over time. The children did not feel they belonged, and emotionally felt less than their counterparts.

This would demonstrate the cyclic dynamics of Figure 3. The internal and external feedback over time altered the psychological framework used to evaluate situations, not only those pertaining to religion. While this dynamic is motivated more by internal than external evaluations, external influences can over time change the global framework.

E. AN ANALOGY

It may be of benefit to many readers to present an analogy to the framework of self-esteem. Envision a sailboat with many sails. Consider that the inputs to this analogy blow from numerous sources. The correlation of the inputs to the sails, the wind, and the output, motion and momentum of the boat, are governed by a number of factors. For example, the type of wind (input), the intensity, how directly they impact the

sail, and the symbiosis of the sails and the wind are all important factors.

Further, consider the sails on the boat, each with its own capacity to capture the wind. The contribution of the individual sails represent specific self-esteems. The boat is the structure that supports everything. A sail is of little substance unless it is associated with the boat. The captain trims the sails based on his desires, understanding, and past experiences. The boat and captain are analogous to global self-esteem.

A point illustrated by this analogy is that certain aspects of this model are observable, others are not. We could all see the boat moving and see the sails straining. However, even a full sail may not be contributing to the movement of the boat. Likewise, all the wind we feel may not be useful in filling a sail. While a storm is certainly noticeable, most wind that fills a sail is unseen. Yet the strong, steady, unfailing wind is the type which most sailors prefer, one which is most useful in causing movement.

It should also be noted that the analogy allows for positive and negative self-esteem. On a global perspective, the boat may be moving toward or away from its desired location. If there is a motion in a positive sense, there exists support for positive global self-esteem.

The individual sails may contribute or take away from the desired motion of the boat. If the majority of the output

from the sails were to continually push away from where the captain and the boat wish to go, then the boat would begin to move in a negative direction, i.e. exhibit negative self-esteem.

It can be noted that the output an individual sail contributes may not significantly change the course of the boat. However, if it is a significant source for this boat, or very directly influenced, it could also make an appreciable difference. The difference it makes could be from its own impact, as well the contributing effects it has on other sails.

One final point will be brought out by this analogy. A sailboat does not move at its top speed when moving in the direction of the wind, as may be expected by non-sailors. Maximum speed is attained when the wind is "abeam"; at a right angle to the direction of travel. This is due to the interaction of the sails. Likewise, the driving forces of self-esteem may not always provide for the results and performance anticipated by conventional wisdom.

The framework of our definition, model, and analogy should assist the manager in better understanding and determining how self-esteem may influence their organization, and the employees within it.

IV. IMPLICATIONS: ENHANCING SELF-ESTEEM

This chapter will identify some of the implications of self-esteem for managers. These implications are not intended to be exhaustive, but are rather the implications which flow most directly from the models presented in the previous chapter.

It would not be wise to begin reading at this point without having knowledge of the previous sections. This section is based heavily on the theory previously presented. It will also avoid presenting material in a "cookbook" fashion. Without a firm understanding of the theory and terms that will be used, the reader would likely find themselves confused, or worse yet, equipped with dangerous misinterpretations.

If your desire was for general information on theory and the general state of research on the subject, this thesis has already completed those sections. The references provided at the end of the thesis should provide a continuation point for additional study.

This chapter will begin by presenting managerial implications of self-esteem in organizations. A discussion of the importance of self-esteem to organizations will be followed by presenting some processes that may be used to affect desired outcomes through the enhancement of self-

esteem. The chapter will conclude with some implications of this thesis for further research.

As has been brought out previously, the focus of this thesis is on self-esteem within organizations. To this end, it avoids family/child counseling, as well as most developmental considerations. However, in some cases a manager must deal with personnel whose coping techniques, personal development, or quite possibly their behavior and/or personality in toto, are not at an adult level. In such a case, these considerations may not apply. The implications have been developed and are based on the theory and framework of mature, adult self-esteem. As the theory may not clearly apply, applications drawn from the theory would be suspect, and best not implemented.

A. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The managerial implications of self-esteem have been broken into three subsections. The first section discusses the importance of self-esteem for coping behavior. This is followed by the role of self-esteem in non-routine and/or unstructured tasks. The managerial section concludes with some processes, based on the models in the last chapter, for enhancing self-esteem.

1. The Importance of Self-esteem for Coping Behavior

One facet of the importance of self-esteem to organizations can be inferred from Figure 3 in the preceding

chapter. It has been asserted that the process of coping with situations is significantly related to increased self-esteem. As individuals encounter a situation, they have the choice of avoidance or coping. If they chose to cope and/or act on the situation, then there will be an increased feeling of personal approval and an increase in situational self-esteem. Increased situational self-esteem, in turn, further increases the likelihood of successful coping. The feelings of situational self-esteem or self-efficacy influence one's choice of activities and environmental settings. People will avoid activities and settings that they believe exceed their capabilities, but they undertake, perform assuredly, and persist at those that they judge themselves capable of managing (Bandura, 1977). Thus, increased self-esteem and coping are reciprocally connected in a self-perpetuating, cyclic process.

The influence of self-esteem on organizations, and the desirability thereof, should be coming clearer. Inherent in the very process of coping with situations, the employee is performing and acting on the organization's tasks. The act of coping with the task leads to an increased perception of self-efficacy and task (situational) self-esteem. This increase will in turn lead to increased potential to further act in this and similar task situations. This pattern of action would certainly be more preferable to the organization than a pattern of avoidance. It follows that the feelings of

employee self-efficacy and situational self-esteem should be of importance to managers and their organizations due to the related behavioral implications.

2. The Crucial Role of Self-esteem in Unstructured Tasks

Self-esteem appears to be especially important in relatively non-routine, unstructured tasks. This is due to the relatively independent and creative nature of high self-esteem coping, together with the fact that unstructured tasks require this sort of coping.

The link between self-esteem and independence/creativity may be inferred from the cyclic process of Figure 3. An employee who begins to cope with a given task or situation will begin to increase their self-efficacy and situational self-esteem. They become more focused on their internal evaluations, our cyclic process, and less on outside influences, i.e. peer accomplishments and external evaluations (Bednar, et al, 1989, Brockner, 1988 or Coopersmith, 1967) . This does not imply that the contextual variables do not matter; rather, they are less influential by comparison. Self-esteem becomes an increasing consideration for those organizational tasks and environments that are not extensively supervised and dictated. Therefore, for the organization where independent work and visionary effort is required, self-esteem is of greater need.

The need for creativity in non-routine, unstructured tasks has been well documented. Creative work has been shown to be more fruitful in work environments with less hierarchical orientation or high degrees of structure concerning rules and work behavior . When considering creative work, such as that being done by research scientists, it was found that role performance was enhanced to the degree their work space was not marked by high orientation to management priorities or a rigid time clock. (See, for example, McCarrey and Edwards, 1973)

An employee with a firm sense of situational self-esteem will likely be perceived to be better equipped and more apt to deal with those tasks that are less structured and defined. As a part of this self-esteem, they will have an increased sense of confidence and self-efficacy. Their perception of the situation will be from this viewpoint. Then, based on Figure 3, they will more likely cope and act on the situation as they have perceived it.

In those situations where the process or environment is well defined, structured, and typically has close supervision, enhanced self-esteem, especially global, may not be as desirable. When work is highly repetitious, a standard will often be established of what is expected. High self-esteem individuals have not been shown to exhibit increased performance in these situations (Mossholder, Bedeian & Armenakis, 1982). In some cases, low self-esteem individuals

even out-perform them. The low self-esteem individuals will rely to a greater extent on the external expectations and follow the prescribed processes.

Figure 3 indicates that low self-esteem and a pattern of avoidance can also become a cyclic process. As a consideration by itself, decreased situational self-esteem of employees in structured tasks may not be of focal importance to an organization. However, employees who behave in patterns that avoid tasks, especially those which need to be accomplished and are significant to the organization, would quickly become noticeable to management. Therefore, even with tasks and structures that are relatively highly defined, the organization may need to consider the self-esteem of it's employees.

The choice to cope or avoid is not always outwardly recognizable. As was presented earlier, the behavior is not of paramount importance to our model, but the impetus of the behavior, or the function that the behavior serves. For example, avoidance may be exhibited in employee performance which is below maximum capable effort, or an employee not utilizing all of their applicable skills. It may also be masked in delay, excuses, or inordinate preparation. It is these facets of organizational implications and employee behavior, along with the other more personal benefits, that our model accesses.

Blatant avoidance behavior would normally be distinguishable to management. However, the loss of potential contributions from the employees is not as clearly identifiable. Current management literature abounds with references to empowering employees and, in essence, asking for them to do more than limiting their performance to complying with management's directives. They are being asked to propose continuous improvements, to become more involved, and to take initiative. (See, for example, Peters and Waterman, 1982, Bennis and Nanus, 1985)

Self-esteem is a significant factor to an organization that desires to institute these types of empowering processes. This "extra" initiative being sought is not clearly defined, and by it's very nature, not dogmatically or autocratically controlled. It relies to a great extent on the employees responding to opportunities, making their own opportunities, and taking action. The processes of avoidance or coping, and self-esteem, are therefore central and foundational to much of the empowerment literature and contemporary management.

3. The Change Process: Enhancing Self-esteem

The thesis will now present some guidelines for how a manager may realize the increased benefits of self-esteem in an organizational setting by enhancing employee self-esteem.

The discussion of enhancing self-esteem will be based on the model of self-esteem, self, and self-concept shown

earlier in Figure 2 in the preceding chapter. We will investigate a number of the areas in that figure and provide possibilities of actions that could stimulate the self-esteem of the employee, and thereby improve task performance.

Referring back to Figure 2, area 4 is where the individual's self-concept is firmly based on an accurate discernment of the self, and the individual emotionally values this perception. It was also proposed that this was where self-esteem was most explicitly supported. We now propose that certain actions and processes may be utilized to shift the alignment of Figure 2, enlarging area 4, and thereby increasing the more securely based aspects of the individual's self-esteem.

Area 5 of Figure 2 contains facets of the employee's self which the individual does not recognize in his/her self-concept but which would be emotionally valued if recognized. There may be any number of reasons why something of value is not recognized, but a prudent manager could coach the employee in a discovery process. It is recommended that the employee be guided to a self evaluation until the facet they value is discovered and accepted. As will be discussed later, it is not recommended that the manager try to force this recognition.

Our example of this in the last chapter was that of a woman who did not feel she commanded respect in the office. The woman may have for some time now avoided situations that

would cause the perceived lack of respect to be evidenced. The manager may be able to convince the woman to consider whether this situation still exists. This evaluation should be as realistic as possible, and for this reason may require the manager to remain involved. The employee may misidentify some actions or behavior she encounters in the organization based on her past views. The self-evaluation in this case takes on the process of a personal paradigm shift.

The organizational potential revealed by area 5 is immense. No new training or education programs were required, no new employees were hired. Yet, additional knowledge, skills and abilities could be made available for the organization. It is made possible by the recognition of hidden or unrecognized talents or abilities, an understanding of Figure 2, and a self-evaluative process by the employee.

The process just described is one of discovery. A manager may next question if and/or how improving the skills or tools of the employee impacts our proposed process of self-esteem. It does, and it does so beyond the direct impact on performance. A better tool or increased skill should directly relate to increased performance, in an obvious relationship. However, it will also raise the perceived competence and self-efficacy if the skill is valued. Gaining knowledge and skills that enable one to fulfill personal standards of merit tend to heighten interest and a firm sense of personal efficacy (Bandura, 1982). This perception will then enter our process

and add to performance through increased coping, rather than avoidance.

Here, a question may arise in the mind of the reader about what a manager should do if the employee attaches value to something that is not part of their self. The manager should then determine if it is part of the self-concept or not, i.e. is it part of area 6 or area 7?

Recall that area 7 is one that holds value to the employee, but is not part of their self or self-concept. In this case, the manager could consider providing the opportunity for the employee to gain this facet as a part of their self. It should be noted that we suggest providing an opportunity to gain this talent, skill, etc., not necessarily directing the employee in its acquisition. This will allow the employee to choose the action. The importance of this will be amplified when we consider area 6.

Area 6 is similar to area 7, with the addition that the individual incorrectly perceives that they already maintain the skill or ability. The manager must exercise more care and consideration when dealing with this area. As with area 5, the manager should coach the employee on a self-evaluative process. When the realization that the self-concept is not supported by the self becomes apparent to the employee, the manager could, as with area 7, provide the opportunity for filling the void now realized. This could be accomplished with training or education, for example.

When considering potential action with regard to areas 6 and 7 of the employee, the manager needs to consider if offering opportunities is a possible and/or desirable undertaking for the organization. Much of this will be based on each unique situation, the employee, the available assets, and how the requirements relate to the organization. While being sensitive to the benefits of improved self-esteem as addressed in the beginning of this chapter, it is also recognized that organizations have a limited number and amount of assets, and must use them in the an efficient manner. Directing the use of organizational assets for the benefit of self-esteem of it's employees in areas 6 and 7 may have a multi-dimensional return-on-investment for the organization. This is due to the potential of improved performance due to the more direct effect of the new knowledge, skills and abilities, as well as the increased coping due to the increased situational self-esteem and self-confidence.

Area 1 also affords significant areas of increase for self-esteem. Recall that it is an area of the self that is unrecognized to the individual, as area 5, but it is not an area of emotional value to the individual. These facets of the self may be considered valueless or undesirable.

If a facet of the self in area 1 is considered undesirable, processes of first recognizing and then coping could be used to raise a sense of awareness in the individual, thereby moving it to area 2, followed by increased coping to

move it to area 4. The managerial process that will be described to increase coping is based on the clinical processes described by Bednar, Wells, and Peterson (1989) to help individuals deal with situations they have been avoiding. The foundation of our approach is that the employee must first come to the recognition of their avoidance process, that is, move the avoidance from area 1 to area 2. It may appear perfectly obvious to another individual that an employee is avoiding a task or situation. It is not always such a clear perception for the employee themselves. The avoidance techniques may be rooted and obscured within their personality, their routine, or habitual behaviors, as well as their inter-personal and intra-personal processes.

Employees need to come to the point where they can identify and label their avoidance patterns or behavior in clear and specific terms. Bednar, et al, note that this process may be very difficult for some employees. They may not recognize the avoidance, or may wish to justify it. At this point, the manager should try to focus the employee on only describing the process, not attaching any justification or emotion to it. The avoidance behavior and process should be identified as clearly as possible.

After the employee is able to identify their avoidance, they need to identify the feelings associated with it. It is important to link the negative feelings the employee experiences back to their pattern of avoidance. This

is also a point in the process where emotions, and justification for the avoidance, can become quite strong. It should be apparent that identifying emotions which are not pleasant can be very distressing for the employee and the manager. A manager should be personally prepared for these emotions.

A model of the process to this point, of coming to an awareness of their avoidance, is related to the framework of self-esteem provided by Figure 2. The avoidance is a part of their self, although in many ways undiscovered. The first step presented was to develop a concept and understanding of this part of the self, the avoidance. This step now clarifies the feelings and emotions attached to the concept.

To this point, the process has been one of investigation and identification. The third step in the process toward increased coping is to realistically face avoidance and the negative self-evaluations associated with it. The very act of clearly identifying and labeling one's own negative thoughts and feelings is a coping response to a difficult situation. In describing the avoidance and the feelings associated with it, the employee is now coached to recognize the situation more realistically. This is a point where the manager is vitally important to the process. He or she may need to point out to the employee that the very process of identifying these negative feelings is a process of

coping. It is important to become aware of the feelings associated with this coping response.

It may be helpful for the manager to question the employee on how they feel at this point for being more honest with themselves. In this way, a difficult situation becomes focused on the process of coping.

The final step is to learn how to cope more consistently and to identify the feelings associated with coping. While the process for clinical application, as presented by Bednar and associates, would now focus on deep, personal situations, our thrust is on more organizational situations. Therefore, the employee could now focus on how best to cope with a task or organizational requirement. In most cases, this would be significantly less difficult than resolving significant personal processes. Learning to do this in organizational settings, and identify the feelings associated with it, is the final step.

When assisting an employee in strengthening their coping responses, the manager should attempt to focus on what the employee needs to do in situations in order to approve of their behavior. This is often found after considering the conditions and sources of anxiety that the employee often tries to avoid. For specific situations, it is also of benefit to note the thoughts and feelings which accompany the employee's coping responses.

Many additional insights on how to promote coping over avoidance are brought out by Bednar and associates (1989). It should be emphasized that, from their experiences and individual clinical practices, they conclude that the process of stimulating coping is not difficult, although it may be time consuming.

It should be noted that the process just described has not focused on increasing the employee's skills (task competencies). It has not provided the employee with further instructions on how to perform the task, or provided them with additional tools (equipment). It has energized a process that, however difficult, leads to increased performance and self-esteem.

There are also cases in which area 1 may contain unappreciated parts of the self which deserve to be valued by the individual. In most such cases, the individual would not have been avoiding the knowledge of this facet, but simply unaware of it and/or its value. Here, the individual could be coached in a sense of appreciation of the facet. After coming to a sense of awareness, the individual could then, with a sense of appreciation, include the facet in area 4.

Finally, the manager may also encounter misperceptions held by the individual in area 3. Here, the individual includes in his/her self-concept some beliefs about the self which are inaccurate, but do not have the emotional worth as beliefs in area 6. As with area 6, the manager could coach

the employee on a self-evaluative process to resolve the disparity between the self and the self-concept. Since emotional value is not attached to these beliefs, the individual may let go of the misperceptions. However, in the process of learning more of themselves, the employee may also choose to develop the facet as a part of their self, moving to area 2. The evaluative process may also excite the employees emotions, moving the belief from area 3 to area 6. Each of these areas has already been discussed.

B. IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This thesis has summarized much of the important work which has been performed within the area of self-esteem. Based on this information, it has defined self-esteem as the emotional valuation individuals have of themselves and the degree of certainty of this valuation. It has also shown how self-esteem is distinct from, but based on, the self and the self-concept.

The thesis has also considered the influence that avoidance or coping with situations has on the development or hinderance of self-esteem. Coping with situations of anxiety to the individual was presented as being one of the primary sources for the escalation of self-esteem. And the reverse would apply for avoiding those situations.

It would be of significant benefit through further research to more precisely refine and define this relationship

between coping and increased self-esteem. Future research should also test the utility of the change processes proposed earlier in this chapter.

Chapter III discussed the global and situational facets of self-esteem. Global self-esteem is a general, permeating sense of worth the individual maintains. It is also the general framework the individual utilizes to evaluate their worth. This sense is carried forward to new situations, or situations of less importance to the individual. There are however some situations wherein the individual may have a decidedly different sense of worth than in general. This situational self-esteem is then considered to become incorporated into the global self-esteem of the individual.

Our implications have dealt exclusively with situation self-esteem. It would be of benefit to further analyze the relationship between global and situational self-esteem and the implications of global self-esteem for managers. How modifiable is global self-esteem? By what processes is situational self-esteem incorporated into global self-esteem?

It is also proposed that situational self-esteem be further researched to determine its relationship to behavior. Measures for situational self-esteem should be further refined so that these relationships can be established. The research could then be accomplished through both field studies in organizational settings and in experimental studies in more controlled laboratory settings.

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